[10] It was in the bitter experience of 1918 that the faithful followers of Christ Jesus met a similar condition. They were forging ahead, making vigorous efforts to give the testimony concerning God and his kingdom, when summarily Satan's forces stopped that work. For several months God's church on earth collectively was held in restraint. A few were actually behind prison bars, but all were restrained. Collectively they prayed for deliverance, and for such a deliverance that would enable them to give further testimony to the honor and glory of Jehovah God. God heard that prayer and supplication that ascended from his faithful ones, and in his own due time he broke the bonds that held them and sent those who loved him forward to be his witnesses. Today the anointed can plainly see how the words of the psalmist fit that experience of those who were then collectively holding fast with honesty and sincerity, desiring to further serve and magnify Jehovah's name.

[11] When the church sees that God has been gracious and has heard the prayer of the faithful, has granted deliverance and has opened the door of opportunity, gratitude must be expressed. The psalmist therefore says: "Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple; I was brought low, and he helped me." (Vss. 5, 6) This is an acknowledgment of the mercy and loving-kindness of Jehovah toward those whom he loves. It could not be truly said that Jesus had failed in his work and that God must show mercy unto him. Jesus performed everything perfectly. The body members perform nothing perfectly. Truly Jesus could say that Jehovah is gracious and righteous, but the mercy of the Lord mentioned here clearly applies in particular to the body members of the "servant", and from and after 1918. Those who compose the "servant" class on earth from that time forward must see and acknowledge mistakes and shortcomings and cry for mercy, and this was done. Jehovah graciously bestowed that mercy upon the "servant" class and delivered the remnant.

[12] Then the words, "The Lord preserveth the simple," could hardly be said to have any application personally to Jesus. The word "simple" used in this text means silly or foolish. The words do properly apply to the members of the "servant" class when entering and passing through the fiery experiences of 1918, and the words apply only to them. It is not an unusual thing for the Lord Jesus to speak of his imperfect body members as of himself. He assumes responsibility for them. This is specifically shown in the words of Psalm 69:5: "O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee." The Lord and Head of the church or "servant" class speaks concerning the imperfections of those creatures on earth who form a part of the "servant". The "simple" therefore must be limited to the body members of the "servant". But the words "I was brought low, and he [Jehovah] helped me" apply both individually to Jesus and to the body members of the "servant" class.

[13] It was in 1919 that the church began to realize that deliverance had come. It was in the year 1922 that the church had a better appreciation of that deliverance and that there was yet much work to be done to the honor of God's great name. Lifting up the head with thanksgiving and joy the "servant" then said: "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." (Vss. 7, 8) Jehovah had dealt bountifully with the "servant", and in the latter part of the year 1919 the faithful began to rest in the Lord and to fully trust him and rejoice. Then the Lord began the opening to the faithful of a better understanding of the Scriptures. They had seen Elijah go and the double portion of his spirit had come upon them as the Elisha class, and therefore they rested confidently in the Lord. The invigorating power of the spirit and the understanding of the Scriptures brought confidence to the faithful ones and showed them that there was much work for them to do. Truly then the "servant" was freed from tears and his feet became strong to run on in the work set before him. It was the time of new courage and confidence in God. The faithful now began to manifest real love for God by unselfishly responding to the call to gird on the armor and go forth to battle for the King and the kingdom.

[14] In this courageous attitude the "servant" declares: "I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living." (Vs. 9) These words constitute an expression of renewed vigor. No longer would the "servant" sit idly by, but would go forward. Such from now on are classed as "young men" eager for the fray. Fears were flung to the winds. No longer is there a dimness of sight, because the temple of heaven was opened and gradually light was shining into the eyes of the "servant". Then the "servant" began to walk humbly before the Lord; meaning that the "servant" began joyfully and willingly to obey the commandments of the Lord, and the moving cause for this action was love or unselfishness. The words "in the land of the living" cannot mean to be seated with Jesus at the right hand of Jehovah God in heaven, as has often been stated. The words refer to the living creatures on earth during the time of their sojourn and while members of the "servant" class and while in the organism of flesh. This conclusion is fully supported by the following scripture texts:

[15] "I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."—Ps. 27:13, *Rotherham*.

[16] "Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living."—Job 28:13.

[17] "God shall likewise destroy thee for ever: he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwell-

ing place, and root thee out of the land of the living." —Ps. 52:5.

18 "I cried unto thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living." —Ps. 142:5.

19 "I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living."—Isa. 38:11.

20 "For he [Jesus] was cut off out of the land of the living."—Isa. 53:8.

21 "But I was like a lamb, or an ox, that is brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, saying, Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered."—Jer. 11:19.

22 The words "land of the living" did apply to Jesus at the time when his life upon the earth was limited to a few hours. He understood that most assuredly. At the most, however, these words could have had only a miniature fulfilment upon Jesus. It seems clear that the words are intended to have a larger fulfilment upon those on earth who constitute a part of the 'elect servant' class at the second coming of the Lord. The words may therefore be said to properly apply to the church from and after the building up of Zion. It has pleased Jehovah to give his "servant" an extensive work to be done on earth in these last days. The "servant" is now engaged in completing the witness work that Jehovah commanded must be done before Armageddon. Understanding this to be true the words of the psalmist become clear that the "servant" now walks on before the Lord, offering himself as a living sacrifice and joyfully doing the work that is committed to him to do.

23 "I believed, therefore have I spoken; I was greatly afflicted. I said in my haste, All men are liars." (Vss. 10, 11) The apostle quotes the language of verse ten and then adds: "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written." (2 Cor. 4:13) When Jesus was enduring his great trial in Gethsemane he had faith that his Father would deliver him. In like manner, when undergoing great suffering Job said: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." (Job 13:15) Every word and act of Jesus between his Gethsemane agony and his death discloses his complete faith in his Father. The loneliness of Jesus is exhibited in the words of the psalmist. In that hour of great need there was not one creature upon whom he could lean for help. Therefore the declaration, "All men are liars." Otherwise stated, his disciples had agreed to things that they would do, but they did not do them, due to their own weakness. That was not a deliberate statement made by Jesus, but one made in alarm or haste. No apology is made for it by him herewith, because it is the truth. To Jesus there seemed to be a delay by his Father in response to his cry. He became alarmed, doubtless thinking something had gone wrong with him and he had not fully performed his duty. The three trusted disciples, instead of being on the alert and watching to render aid, had fallen asleep. In that moment of surprise, haste and alarm Jesus is represented as using the words, "All men are liars." In other words, 'no one is true to his promise.' This is but an expression of emptiness applying to all that is human. God alone was true and trustworthy. The confidence of Jesus in his Father did not fail, but all men had failed him.

24 These verses seem to more fully apply to the church at the time of the distress and trials of 1918. Many who had been trying to do a work in the name of the Lord were forcibly restrained of their liberty. There was much to do, and it was at a time when the faithful were unable to work because some were actually put behind prison bars and others were otherwise restrained. At that time many who had been prominent in the Lord's work showed little or no interest in their brethren who were imprisoned. Some of these said: 'Suppose our officers should be others than those who are in prison, what then would we do? These men have been sentenced to eighty years imprisonment, and the chances are they will never get out, and why should we not look to some other quarter?' Thus reasoning they did not keep their promise to stand firmly by those in the Lord. It was a time of exasperation. Some who were devoted to the Lord lost faith in their former brethren but continued to maintain their full faith and confidence in God. The Lord answered the prayer of his faithful people. Those who were faithful and true and who had the opportunity bestirred themselves, sought the Lord with prayer to open the door of opportunity to do something, and soon the Lord saw to it that those incarcerated were made free and the opportunity again given for all who desired to have a part in his service. A full year elapsed, however, before complete freedom came, and when it did come the words of the psalmist show the faithful expressing gratitude to God and love for him because of the provision he had so graciously made.

25 An honest heart must speak for God and must speak the truth. To be honest in the sight of God and of other men and in one's own sight a man must shape his life according to his belief. The Lord's people in 1919 and afterwards saw how marvelously Jehovah had expressed his love for his people collectively. The "servant" of God is then collectively represented by the psalmist as saying: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"—Vs. 12.

26 Truly it must be said that if the Lord had not exercised special care for his people during 1918 and 1919 the truth would have been crushed out of the earth. That was what Satan expected to accomplish. But the Lord had his hand over those who loved him then. He brought these safely through, and then and later has shown how marvelously he has exercised his loving-kindness for them during that hour of great stress. Where there is no real gratitude there is no

real love. The faithful now seeing what Jehovah had done for his people in the time of great stress, and how he had again brought them together to engage in his work, these exclaimed in word and by the course of action taken: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" These words do not refer to the individual blessings bestowed upon any one, but refer to the benefits bestowed upon the church collectively. The prison experience of 1918 was not confined to a few, but the church on earth as a whole was involved; and the faithful ones, realizing that fact, have been better enabled to appreciate the blessedness of their condition and the goodness bestowed upon them by Jehovah. God stopped the persecution of his people just in time to save the remnant. Otherwise those few actually in prison would have died there and those on the outside of prison bars would have been so completely scattered that there would have been no regathering of them or further work done. This Jehovah would not permit.

[27] Responding to his own question the speaker in the Psalm now says: "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." (Vs. 13) At the moment when the mob was attempting the arrest of Jesus, Peter tried to prevent this by the use of the sword. Jesus rebuked him and said: "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11) The "cup" represented the potion which the Father had provided for Christ Jesus and marked out the course that he must take, and it was therefore a cup of salvation to him because he must be obedient to Jehovah. Jesus gained and continued to hold his Father's approval only by drinking that cup, which means that he always delighted to do his Father's will. He did so with real patience, having always inherent joy that he was doing right regardless of the persecution and suffering to which he was subjected. Jesus knew that his Father was with him. Knowing this he would go forward calling upon the name of Jehovah, who always keeps inviolate his covenant.

[28] And such was even so with the church in 1918 and in what has followed since. It first seemed that the work was done; but when it was revealed that there was much more to do, and that the doing of that work might bring another time of great trial upon God's people, with renewed courage and burning zeal the remnant have gone forward with the work, determined to finish it, by the grace of God. The witness work to be done is the will of Jehovah God; and his faithful remnant will do it, by his grace, regardless of what amount of suffering and persecution may be brought upon them. Such is the potion God has poured for them, and it is therefore to them a cup of salvation. Those who refuse to engage in the service of the Lord in obedience to his will, because of fear or restraint of Satan and his organization, thereby wilfully reject the cup which is given to them and which is the cup of salvation for all those who love God.

[29] The faithful rallied to the standard of the Lord, and those first starting in the right way were soon joined by other faithful ones, and these encouraged one another. Particularly from and after 1922 the little company of anointed ones determined to do the witness work in the name of Jehovah at all costs. There has been much opposition put forth by the enemy, but the witness work has gone forward. The remnant had made a vow of consecration to do the will of God. The same one had responded to the call for the kingdom and made a vow to perform that covenant. Therefore the remnant said and continues to say: "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people."—Vs. 14.

[30] The remnant will leave no room for doubt in the mind of anyone consecrated to God as to what the "servant" has done and is determined to do. In the presence of all of God's people he, the "servant" of God, goes on to a completion of the work marked out to be done. The vows mentioned in this verse include both the vow of consecration and the vow or covenant for the kingdom, the condition of each being faithful performance by the remnant. The latter vow requires the creature to bring forth the fruits of the kingdom, and none can expect to be in the kingdom who does not bear the fruits thereof. (Matt. 21:43; John 15:1-8) The paying of these vows in the presence of God's people means that the faithful boldly proclaim the truth in this day of judgment and without slacking the hand continue to do so until the work is completed.

[31] Then adds the speaker in the Psalm: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Vs. 15) Having entered into the covenant by sacrifice, for some time the thought of the consecrated was that God is glad whenever one of these consecrated ones finishes his course in death. The idea has persisted that all the consecrated should welcome the coming of death because that would mean a gain both to the creature and to his God. This idea caused to grow up amongst the Lord's people the conclusion that it is proper for the consecrated to welcome an early death rather than to have length of days on the earth. Clearly such a conclusion is wrong. Life is to be desired above all things because in no other condition could one serve God. He should be anxious to spend all of his energy possible in giving honor and praise to the name of Jehovah amongst men, that Jehovah's name might be honored. Jesus was the first one that entered into the covenant by sacrifice, and when he was face to face with death the force of this text could be appreciated for the first time. Many attempts were made upon his life by the enemy, but without avail. In effect Jehovah said to his beloved Son: 'No evil power can pluck you out of my hand. You are consecrated to do my will, and it is my will